

October 17, 1956

Dr. Paul Doty
Dept. Chemistry
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Dr. Doty:

While outlining a review on bacterial recombination mechanisms, I have been struck by the paucity of physical measurements on pneumococcal dna, at least measurements I could give published citations for. The 1943 Avery et al. paper mentioned some preliminary studies, which have been quoted but never given in any detail: I would be especially anxious for an account which emphasized the difficulties in dealing with linear polyelectrolytes like DNA. I imagine that such studies are now in progress, but am I ~~not~~ right in the statement that most of the assertions of particle size of the transforming agent are based on analogy with other material?

In particular, I would be grateful to you for any recent references (say since 1954) that would be immediately relevant to the dimensions and homogeneity of preparations used in the transformation experiments. As your own work on this reaches print, I would also be grateful to you for reprints of it.

~~But~~ I am rather anxious to avoid compounding the confusion and not refer to conclusions that can't be documented, but it would be personally helpful for my own state of mind if you can quote more recent work that has not yet published.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics